

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) joined the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and other local women's organizations at the Utica YWCA to highlight the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, recently signed into law, which ensures that employers pay employees based on their work and productivity, not their gender. Arcuri also highlighted tax credit provisions in the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act to help area women and families.

"Fair pay isn't just about equality, it is about families making ends meet with rising costs and economic uncertainty," **Arcuri said**. "I want to thank all the organizations here with me today for their dedicated work on behalf of women and families in our community. I am also proud to announce the Making Work Pay Tax Credit, recently signed into law, which means working families and individuals in the Mohawk Valley will see extra money in their paycheck every week starting on April 1st."

"As an organization committed to ending all forms of discrimination, the YWCA is joining countless other organizations in celebration of passage of the Lilly Ledbetter Act," **Linda Czerkies, YWCA Mohawk Valley Executive Director, said**

. "This historic legislation will not only benefit women, but all workers in the United States. The YWCA would like to thank Congressman Arcuri for his longstanding support of women and the passage of this bill."

In January, the House of Representatives passed, with Arcuri's strong support, The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (S. 181), which the President signed into law immediately. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act restores the law as it was prior to a narrowly-decided (5-4) 2007 Supreme Court decision, Ledbetter v. Goodyear. That decision upended longstanding law and made it much harder for women and other workers to pursue pay discrimination claims. This bill restores the prior law. Arcuri also voted for The Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 12) which strengthens the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and ensures that women have access to the courts in the event of a pay discrimination case.

Women, who now more than ever provide for their families and create economic growth in Upstate New York, still earn less than men. Thirty years ago, a woman earned 59 cents for every dollar a man earned. Today, on average, a woman earns just 78 cents for every dollar earned by a man. The Institute of Women's Policy Research has found that this wage disparity will cost women anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million in lost wages over a lifetime.

To further help local families, Arcuri recently voted for, and the President signed into law, the American Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which provides immediate tax relief for 95 percent of working families. Under the Making Work Pay Tax Credit, working families and individuals will see extra money go into their paycheck every week starting on April 1, 2009. Individuals making less than \$75,000 and couples making less than \$150,000 will be able to withhold less.

The bill also includes relief for middle class families from the Alternative Minimum Tax, which will protect 42,000 individuals in the 24th Congressional District from paying higher taxes this year.

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